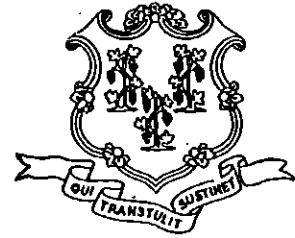


# DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION



Testimony of William Rubenstein  
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing  
March 14, 2011

## Governor's Bill SB-1015 "An Act Concerning the Palliative Use of Marijuana"

Sen. Coleman, Rep. Fox, Sen. Kissel, Rep. Hetherington and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee, I am William Rubenstein, Gov. Malloy's nominee as Commissioner of Consumer Protection. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Governor's Bill, SB 1015, "An Act Concerning the Palliative Use of Marijuana."

This bill allows for the use, acquisition, possession, cultivation and distribution of marijuana under well-defined circumstances and provides for a prominent role by the Department of Consumer Protection to ensure proper registration of patients and physicians as well as to provide for necessary enforcement provisions of this proposal.

Specifically, the proposal requires that qualifying patients and physicians that elect to certify the palliative use of marijuana for their patients are required to register with the Department and to pay a fee which is deposited into a nonlapsing "palliative marijuana administration account." The proceeds of this account are to be used to provide funding to the Department of Consumer Protection for administering the provisions of this act.

Additionally, the proposal provides that law enforcement agencies may contact the Department to verify whether a qualifying patient or a primary caregiver is properly registered with the Department, and they may also obtain information contained in the registry for law enforcement purposes.

The Department has carefully reviewed the administrative components of this proposal and can report that not only are we supportive of the requirements and safeguards contained in the bill, we concur with the Governor that DCP is the appropriate agency to assume these responsibilities.

We are confident that our current use of technology places us in a relatively easy position to take on this task. Specifically, DCP's E-License System is used today to manage our agency's 190 different license types which accounts for over 240,000 active credential holders. This system is in place and ready to accommodate the new credential holders—doctors and patients—that this act contemplates.

In addition to E-License, DCP current employs the use of another technology tool that is crucial in meeting the privacy and confidentiality requirements needed to comply with this act. Specifically, DCP's Drug Control Division currently administers the State's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program via a computer program called the Connecticut Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System (CPMRS). This system is used by physicians, pharmacists and law enforcement officials to monitor distribution of controlled substance prescriptions. In addition to serving as a repository for prescribed drugs, it provides the capability to monitor distribution of controlled substance prescriptions, to identify patterns of abuse and fraud, and to initiate enforcement action when necessary. CPMRS could readily be used to support the registrants anticipated in to this bill. While this would broaden the present use of CPMRS to include a non-prescribed drug—marijuana—the technology is in place to swiftly accomplish this task.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments in support of the Governor's Bill. I would be happy to respond to any additional questions you may have.